

COMMUNITY ACTION VOICE



A Quarterly Publication of the Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County

Food Basket Pilot Program Is Launched!

By Herman Pena, Program Manager II

Most food banks do not distribute food directly from their offices and warehouse facilities to those in need. Instead, they collect food and distribute it to a network of member agencies that take the food back to their neighborhoods and give it out to the needy. However, in San Bernardino County that all changed on February 28, 2005.



Client receives bag at the Food Bank.

The Community Action Partnership Food Bank of San Bernardino County has initiated an Emergency Food Basket Program to respond to the many calls for food assistance that we get daily.

Emergency food boxes are distributed three mornings per week; **Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.** Each applicant is personally interviewed to assess needs and confirm eligibility requirements. Most of the food is packaged or canned to prevent spoilage, but fresh fruit and vegetables will be provided when available along with bread and pastries. Each box will provide a three-day supply of emergency food.

For eligibility requirements and other information, please call (909) 386-5011. ♥

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)-

Helps relieve emergency and non-emergency situations for eligible electric and gas customers.

For assistance with disconnected and final notices on utility accounts, clients must apply in person and attend one of the scheduled Energy Education Workshops available on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursdays at 8:00 a.m. or 12:00 p.m. on a first-come-first-served basis. Be early and prepared with all required documents. Call (909) 885-1219 for requirements.

CAPSBC Celebrates its 40th Anniversary (pg.5)

FREE TAX Preparation Available for low-income (pg.5)

Homeless Coalition Receives HUD's Largest Funding Allocation (pg.4)

"Working in partnership with the San Bernardino community to support low-income residents in achieving self-sufficiency"

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CAPSBC Programs and Services:

Administration (909) 891-3863

Family Development Program (FDP) (909) 891-3950

Food Stamp Employment & Training (FSET) (909) 891-3765

CAPSBC Food Bank (909) 386-5011

Weatherization/Energy Conservation (909) 885-1219

Nutrition for Seniors (NFS) (909) 891-3936

Inland Empire Individual Development Accounts (IEIDA) (909) 891-3827

Homeless Coalition (909) 891-3884

community Action
PARTNERSHIP
Helping People. Changing Lives.

Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County



Message from the Director



This year Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County (CAPSBC) celebrates 40 years of service to the community. Let's take a moment to reflect on all that has transpired and some of the things we have accomplished together.

Working cooperatively for nearly four decades, we have been fortunate to help many of our clients to write inspiring stories of success. In no small measure, their success stories are the result of the compassion, dedication, and astonishing work of our staff. We also recognize the important role of our partnerships with numerous public and private organizations to advocate for an improved quality of living of low-income clients in our communities.

CAPSBC has experienced unprecedented change and growth. We have expanded our capacity and programs. Currently, our budget is more than \$15 million annually, and we leverage \$9.00 for every federal dollar we receive. CAPSBC now has more than 150 dedicated and hardworking staff members and we have transitioned from a public entity to a private non-profit public benefit corporation.

The year 2005 will be very challenging for Community Action Agencies nationwide. The trend of reduced federal and state funding for social programs is out of sync with reality and impeding the ability of communities to alleviate hunger and homelessness. Instead of increasing resources to shelters, affordable housing programs, food assistance programs, and other social services that directly

serve the lowest income Americans, the current administration is proposing drastic cuts to social service program budgets. As a compassionate community of service providers, we must be aggressive in presenting the real story. We must be diligent about keeping records, accurately reporting the number of people we help and how we help them to return to independent living. It is imperative that we are visible and that the stories of the people we serve are heard throughout the community.

Once again, I ask for your renewed commitment to the "Promise of Community Action."

I am very proud to note that through our Strategic Planning process, we have made the "Promise" part of our vision and that we have identified asset building as one of our priorities.

**"Where Your
Dreams and
Our Vision
Become One."**

Let us join together to make this anniversary meaningful and memorable. We have created a volunteer committee of employees who have agreed to lend their time and expertise to plan and implement programs and activities that will help to commemorate this important milestone in the life of CAPSBC. The theme of our anniversary is "Community Action Partnership: Where Your Dreams and Our Vision Become One."

On behalf of the CAPSBC Board, I would like to thank all our staff for their continuous hard work. I also encourage you all to join in celebrating a job well done. We look forward to the possibilities and rewards of another decade of community service.♥

CAPSBC Board of Directors

Michael J. Gallo, Chairman Private Representative
Dr. Robin Calote, 1st Vice Chair Private Representative
Eladio "Eddie" U. Garcia, 2nd Vice Chair District 1
Fred Cordova, 3rd Vice Chair District 5
Bob Brunelle, 4th Vice Chair District 4
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Dr. Jean Peacock, Private Representative
Dorothy Grant, District 2
Gregory G. Smyser, Private Representative
Al Twine, District 5
Aubrey Ward, Jr., District 2

CAB Recognizes Community Partners

Thirty seven individuals and agencies from government, community and faith based, law enforcement, schools, business and media were recognized by the Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County (CAPSBC) Board of Directors during its meeting on February 15, 2005.

Mike J. Gallo, Board Chair and Patricia Nickols, Executive Director handed out the plaques of appreciation to the agencies and thanked them for the support they provided to CAPSBC programs in 2004.



Mr. Gallo hands plaque to partner agency



CAPSBC Board Members



Mr. Gallo hands out plaque to law enforcement

NEWS and EVENTS

IDA Training

Charles James, IDA Program Coordinator and James DeBow III, Family Development Specialist, attended the Assets for Independence (AFI) Grantee Conference held in Baltimore, MD., February 22 -25, 2005. The purpose of the conference is to provide IDA grantees training on the design, direction, guidelines and reporting requirement from AFI leadership.

The conference also provided CAPSBC staff with the opportunity to network and exchange best practices with professionals representing some of the more established and successful IDA Programs from Community Action Agencies, government agencies and other non-profit organizations throughout the United States. ♥

Cal-Neva Community Action Partnership and Region IX Annual Conference

CAPSBC staff attended the California-Nevada and Region IX Annual Conference, "Stepping into the Future: A New Face on Poverty," held on March 14-16, 2005 in San Francisco.



Charles James, Rowena Concepcion, Patricia Nickols, Carolyn Debevec, and Charles Adams Jr. attended the conference.



Ms. Nickols and Ms. Concepcion with Tim Dayonot, Director of State Department of Community Services and Development

Over 100 participants from Community Action Agencies from California, Nevada and Hawaii attended the conference. Speakers include: Margaret J. Washnitzer, Director of the Division of State Assistance, Office of Community Services; Sharon M. Fiji, Regional Administrator, Administration for Children and Families; Tim Dayonot, Director of State Department of Community and Services Development; and Derrick Span, National President, Community Action Partnership. ♥

CAPSBC General Staff Meeting

Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County (CAPSBC) held a General Staff Assembly on February 10 and 11, 2005 at the Feldheym Central Library, 555 West 6th Street, San Bernardino. A total of 139 employees from as far as Wonder Valley attended the meeting.

Patricia L. Nickols, CAPSBC Executive Director, explained that the purpose of the general assembly is to provide an opportunity for the staff to know what is happening in the organization and for management to listen to their ideas and suggestions. Ms. Nickols also emphasized that "CAPSBC is undergoing positive changes to better serve our clients and striving for excellence in all aspects of the organization."

Program/Division Managers gave a brief summary of their program and plans for 2005. The staff were provided with updates and copies of the newly revised Personnel Policies, Strategic Planning, funding/grants received and the status of the new CAPSBC building.

All staff were given a copy of the Executive Director's Bulletin (EDB). The bulletin will highlight the various projects and events involving each division of CAPSBC. EDB will be distributed on a monthly basis following the Community Action Board of Directors meeting. The general staff meeting will be conducted twice a year. ♥

Cal-Neva 2005 Legislative Meeting



Senator Nell Soto with Ms. Nickols and Lois Carson, Riverside CAP Director



Assembly Member Joe Baca, Jr. (D) San Bernardino with Patricia L. Nickols

Patricia L. Nickols, CAPSBC Executive Director attended the Cal/Neva Legislative Conference held on January 24-25, 2005 at the Sheraton Grand Hotel, Sacramento.

Legislators were recognized for their continued support and commitment to Community Action Agencies and other programs that address the issue of poverty. CAPSBC recognized Senator Nell Soto and Assembly Member Joe Baca, Jr. for their support to CAPSBC programs. ♥

CAPSBC Participates in EITC Project

By Sandra Brown, Planner

The 2000 Census reports that 29% (1,337,968) of California families are "asset poor," living from paycheck to paycheck. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) estimates that California has over \$340 million of unclaimed Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC) funds. This means that eligible low-income families are not accessing this tax benefit. The IRS also reports claimed refunds are equally distributed across California area types (large city, large suburb, small metro, and rural).

Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County (CAPSBC) together with six Community Action Agencies in California are joining forces to develop a statewide effort advocating for low-income clients. The

network is reaching out to clients to help them obtain assets through the EITC program. This project, funded through the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for a period of three years, is to implement a demonstration project tracking and measuring how low-income people use their tax refund dollars to stabilize or move their families out of poverty.

Community Action Partnership of Riverside County (CAPRC), the lead agency of the EITC project, is coordinating resources through the California-Nevada Community Action Partnership State Association (Cal/Neva), and the State of California Department of Community Services and Development (CSD). The program includes

sending out flyers about EITC, providing free EITC tax preparation services, and linking EITC with other low-income programs such as the Individual Development Accounts (IDA).

If you are aware of clients in need of the EITC program who is interested in receiving information on Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites please contact Charles James, IDA Program Coordinator at (909) 891-3827. The EITC website address is www.cal-neva.org/eitc/. ♥



E.I.T.C workshop training in session

San Bernardino County Receives HUD Funds to Assist the Homeless

By Naomi Norman, Program Specialist II

On July 27, 2004, Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County (CAPSBC) submitted a proposal to the US Department of Housing and Development (HUD) 2004 Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance funding on behalf of San Bernardino County in the amount of \$8,485,080 for seventeen agencies representing 19 project proposals.



Homeless family in San Bernardino County

HUD released the approval of funding on January 25, 2005 and San Bernardino County will receive a total of \$7,762,515 to fund 16 projects. This amount is so far the biggest allocation that San Bernardino County will receive since we started submitting proposals to HUD in 1997.

CAPSBC submitted two proposals in the 2004 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) application process to implement the Homeless Management Informational System (HMIS) and a Homeless Social Service Mall in the amount of \$2,745,517. The HMIS will track unduplicated numbers of homeless person served

through HUD funded agencies in San Bernardino County. The 2003 Homeless Census and Survey report revealed that there are some 5,270 persons to as many as 8,351 people's homeless in San Bernardino County. The Social Services Mall will provide low-income and homeless clients the opportunity to access a variety of social services under one roof. ♥

Sure Steps Program

By Carolyn Debevecc, Program Manager I

The CAPSBC Family Development Program has submitted a proposal to the Inland Empire United Way (IEUW) for funding in the amount of \$100,000 to implement the Sure Steps Self-Sufficiency Program. If the proposal is funded, Sure Steps will provide case management and ancillary

support services to assist families and individuals to increase their self-determination, improve their job skills, and increase their income to reach the goal of economic self-sufficiency. A unique component of Sure Steps is the Inland Empire Individual Development Account (IEIDA) program. Under

this program, which is a partnership between Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, eligible participants can save toward the purchase of a home, higher education, or entrepreneurship. For every dollar saved by the participant, IEIDA will match two

(Continued on page 5)

(Sure Steps... continued from pg. 4)

dollars, up to a maximum of \$6,000. Successful completion of the IEIDA program is the ultimate goal of Sure Steps. According to Inland Empire United Way guidelines, participation in Sure Steps will be offered to families and individuals with incomes up to 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Awards will be announced by IEUW by mid-June 2005.♥

Strategic Planning Update

By Rowena Concepcion, Assistant to the Director

The CAPSBC Strategic Planning Retreat was successfully concluded on November 4-5, 2004 at the Radisson Hotel, San Bernardino. The retreat was conducted by two consultants from MIG and attended by a total of thirty-four participants: CAPSBC Board members, staff and representatives from the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC).

There were a lot of interactive discussions, workshop exercises and valuable input during the one and a half day session. Topics discussed include a review of CAPSBC vision, mission and organizational values; setting strategic direction and goals; identifying strategies; developing outcomes and objectives; and performance measures. A review of best practices from other Community Action Agencies around the county in the areas of housing, transportation, employment and training, affordable childcare, asset development, advocacy, partnerships, community awareness and staff development were also conducted.

Patricia L. Nickols, CAPSBC Executive Director gave the State of the Agency Address. The State of the Agency Address is based upon the information compiled from the Strategic Mapping activities and ensures the maximum participation of all CAPSBC staff. In her Address, Ms. Nickols talked about the following:

Weatherization Contracts with Riverside County

CAPSBC recently received a contract with the County of Riverside to sub-contract weatherization and appliance work. This is a first for CAPSBC since separating from the County of San Bernardino. This would have been virtually impossible before the separation.

The contract is for three years starting



Home being weatherized

2005. A start date has not been set. There will be an orientation conducted by Riverside County on the

- CAPSBC Significant Accomplishments in the Past 1-2 Years
- Areas Where We Have Been Less Effective
- Major Trends Impacting or Will Likely Impact our Programs
- Opportunities for Growth
- Key Givens for Continued Development and Improvement.

All information from the retreat was compiled by the consultants and came up with a draft Strategic Plan. The CAPSBC Management Team reviewed and provided input to the draft document. CAPSBC staff were provided copies for their review during the General Staff Meeting held on February 10-11, 2005.

The MIG production team is now working on the design and layout of the Strategic Plan document. The first design draft will be submitted on March 22. The Board will review a mockup document at the April 19 Board meeting.♥

CAPSBC 40th Anniversary Celebration Plans

A 40th Anniversary Committee was created to plan and implement this year's celebration and will meet every month to monitor the activities/events suggested and planned. The following events will be conducted: Client/Community, Staff Development/Recognition and Fund-raiser/Recognition Dinner

The following subcommittees were also created with the respective chairperson:

- Program/Events—Carolyn Debevec
- Fund Raising—Naomi Norman
- Publicity/Promotion—Rowena Concepcion

Membership to the sub-committees is open to all the staff who wants to volunteer. Please coordinate with the chairperson.

"CAPSBC: Where Your Dreams and Mission Become One" is the theme chosen for the anniversary submitted by Charles James, IDA Program Coordinator.

The purpose of the celebration is in line with our strategic plan of improving our visibility and part of our branding campaign. The event will also provide the opportunity to recognize staff and other partner organizations for their hard work and support. The celebration will emphasize the important role CAPSBC plays in helping the low-income.

Employee Morale

By Michael Bautista, FDP Specialist

One of the goals of CAPSBC is to ensure that the employees know and feel that they are important and that they matter in the organization. On December 2003, the CAPSBC Employee Morale Committee was created to recommend ways in improving employee morale and encouraging continued achievement. The Committee is composed of 11 members with representatives from all departments, levels and job categories.

The committee established the "Employee of the Quarter" award to recognize employees for their hard work and dedication. The staff nominate and select the deserving employee for the quarter:

- Ellen Dattaray, Supervising Accounting Technician
- Arlene Media, Employment Services Specialist
- Ana Callicott, NFS Site Manager
- Yvonne Flores, Family Development Specialist

The Employee Morale Committee also played an important role in the creation of the CAPSBC Customer Satisfaction Survey that is currently being used throughout the agency. The committee was also a conduit for employees to bring positive ideas and suggestions through the Suggestion Box located in all the programs/division of the agency. The suggestions and ideas were presented to management and as a result, a vending machine and television for the employee break room have been installed. Also committee members and other dedicated employee volunteers worked together to decorate the employee break room with a reading area for all employees, table cloth and other decorations.

The committee conducted fundraising activities to help fund activities for employee including bake sale, penny drive, Cinco de Mayo event and a Pumpkin Bowl-a-thon. The Annual Agency Holiday Event held at the University of Redlands Casa Loma Room was coordinated by the Committee.

On February 23, 2005, Patricia L. Nickols, Executive Director presented the following members a Certificate of Appreciation their outstanding service to the CAPSBC Employee Morale Committee:

Michael Bautista, Family Development
Rowena Concepcion, Administration
Charles Adams Jr., Deputy Director
Ellen Dattaray, Fiscal
David Gallardo, General Services
Darlene McIntosh, FSET
Ron Heningberg, Foodbank
Belinda Bailey, Fiscal
Elena Rodriguez, Operations
Linda Rynn, Nutrition for Seniors
Janette Hazelton, Weatherization

WAY TO GO!
THANKS FOR ALL YOUR HARD WORK!♥

Employee Morale Activities



Cinco de Mayo Folklore Performers



Bowl-A-Thon Fun



Agency Holiday Event December 2004

Trips and Trivia

Tips for Stress Reduction on the Job When Dealing with Difficult Clients

Know your options. Stress comes from the feeling that you don't have control over the situation. To help reduce stress you should have knowledge of options for every situation that may occur.

Don't take it personally. If a customer gets angry with you or becomes verbally abusive, remember the customer's emotions are directed at the product or service you are providing, not directed towards you.

Network. Work with others around you and seek support from your co-workers. Have a backup team and a good rapport with your co-workers.

Empathize with the customer. Next time a customer gets on your nerves, instead of feeling angry, change that into a feeling of empathy. It's a choice you can **make** about the attitude you'll have toward the customer.

Ask what they want you to do. When you have an angry customer ask straight out, "What would you like me to do about this?" Most customers won't make unreasonable demands, however this will open the door to reaching a compromise.

Make small talk. When dealing with difficult customers, learn how to engage in small talk while you are working on the problem or issue.

Praise the customer. Use positive comments even if someone gives you a hard time, find something about their company or their work to compliment them about.

Use the "Columbo" technique. Try to be non-threatening as you ask questions trying to solve a problem. Solicit your customers help in understanding their situation. This technique allows you to gain control over the conversation and thereby reduce the stress associated with it.

In Focus

Providing Opportunities for Growth

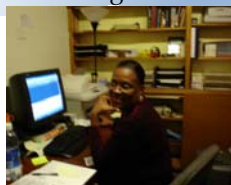
By Darlene McIntosh, ESS

The Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County's (CAPSBC) Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET) Program continues to find new and better opportunities for clients to improve their viability in the job market.

In December 2004, Pastor Bratton brought his church, Greater Faith Grace Bible Church in Rialto in as an FSET work site. Mary Davenport, an FSET client, began working at the Greater Faith Grace Bible Church in Rialto in January 2005.

Mary has considerable education and experience working with computers. She also has worked with other agencies assisting them with obtaining funding for their programs. Mary is currently assisting Greater Faith Grace Bible Church applying for grants to acquire funding for a youth tutorial program. She also assists the church with data entry and updating the church web site. Such training will provide Mary with skills that will make her very desirable in the job market as well as helping the church to provide tutoring and other services to the neighborhood youth.

FSET appreciates the opportunity to provide clients with the ability to acquire such hands on experiences.♥



Mary at the computer

"One of a Kind"

By William Warren Jr., Program Manager II



Ms. Jackson

Michelle Jackson. Ms. Jackson is one of the few field employees of Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County's (CAPSBC) Energy/Weatherization Program that is female. There have only been two in the 9 years that I have been an employee at CAPSBC.

Ms. Jackson joined the California Conservation Corps (CCC) in April of '98. There she gained experience in landscaping, floor buffing and crew leader training. In May of '98 she began working and training as a CCC employee under the Weatherization Energy Efficiency Rehabilitation (WEER) contract between CAPSBC and the CCC. Some of the tasks Ms. Jackson performed were hanging doors, installing windows, sub-flooring, floor tile, ceiling insulation, weather-stripping, using power tools to name a few.

In September of '99 she passed a very competitive interview and was hired as an employee of CAPSBC as a Weatherization' Crew Technician and became a lead-abatement worker. Ms. Jackson began her training as lead inspector/risk assessor and as an assessor in Edison's Appliance Replacement Program in June of 2001. She passed the lead inspector/risk assessor State exam in March of '04, and is now a lead inspector/risk assessor. Passing the State exam is not an easy task and is failed by many.

Ms. Jackson has proven that with hard work and dedication nothing is insurmountable. It is a pleasure having her as an employee at CAPSBC.♥

Employee's Corner

Employee of the Quarter



CAPSBC congratulates Yvonne Flores on being selected by her peers as "Employee of the Quarter" for the last quarter of 2004. Yvonne began her employment with Community Action Partnership on January 14, 2002 in the Food Stamp Employment Training (FSET) program as an Em-

ployment Services Specialist. Yvonne's work skills and people skills soon became apparent to everyone - supervisors, co-workers, and customers. In June 2003, Yvonne moved to the Family Development Program and became a Family Development Specialist for the Obershaw House transitional housing program. Although the work is challenging, Yvonne has earned the respect of all the families that she case manages. She works hard to keep them on track and help them to succeed and attain their goals. Yvonne also finds time in her busy schedule to go to school and pursue some goals of her own. In the workplace Yvonne always keeps a positive, "can-do" attitude, and is a real team player.♥

Welcome New Employees

Marie Estrada, Outreach Worker
Weatherization 1/24/05
Burma Lee Manns, Outreach Worker
Weatherization 1/24/05
Syreeta Penn, Emergency Services Outreach Worker
Family Development 1/24/05
Tim Boehnke, Warehouse Helper
Nutrition 3/7/05
Margaret Bishop, Delivery Driver Person
Nutrition 3/9/05

Farewell and Thank You Retirees

Maria Atilano, Site Manager at Luque Senior Center
22 years, 7 months
Eddie Mikel-Carroll, Delivery Driver Person
for Nutrition for Seniors Program
6 years, 1 month

Announcements

Volunteers are needed in the Nutrition for Seniors Program. Assistance is needed with food preparation, packing meals and clean up. If interested, please call (909) 891-3936.

Monetary donations are needed in the Nutrition for Seniors Program. These donations will go towards the quality of food that is served and delivered to senior participants. For mailing information, please call (909) 891-3936.

Congratulations to: Patricia White as Accounting Technician II; Ann Larsen as Accounting Technician I; Katherine McGrath as Wx Program Aide I; Charles James as IEIDA Program Coordinator; Rowena Concepcion as Assistant to the Director

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Published quarterly by:

Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County
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San Bernardino, California 92415
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Calendar of Events

April:

April 13 – Rental Orientation Workshop
April 19 – CAB Meeting at 4:30 p.m. CAPSBC
Conference Room
April 20 – Homeless Policy Council Meeting
County Government Center
Next Steps Homeless Meeting at
Pastoral Center
April 21 – Project Council Meeting 29 Palms
April 27 – Rental Orientation Workshop

May:

May 11 – Rental Orientation Workshop
May 17 – CAB Meeting at 4:30 p.m. at CAPSBC
Conference Room
May 18 – Next Steps Homeless Task Force
May 19 – Project Council Meeting at Luque Center
May 21 – CAPSBC 40th Anniversary Community
Event. 686 E. Mill Parking lot.

June:

June 15 – Next Steps Homelessness Meeting
Pastoral Center
June 16 – Project Council Meeting. Yucca Valley
June 21 – CAB Meeting at 4:30 p.m. CAPSBC
Conference Room.
June 25 – High Desert Homeless Care Faire

Every Monday: Heap Workshops
Employment Service Department
15980 Main St, Hesperia
Del Rosa Family Learning Center
Every 2nd or 3rd Wednesday: Heap Workshops
Luque Center Senior Nutrition Site-Colton, CA



Community Action Partnership
of San Bernardino County

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The Promise of Community Action

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live.
We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.